Crop Conditions as of October 6, 2011

In general, over the past two weeks, crop harvest has continued to progress, although the recent damp and cool weather has caused some delays in some areas. While harvest in the South, Central and North East Regions is progressing well, the North West and Peace Regions could benefit greatly from a few more weeks of warm, dry weather to get the crop in the bin. Table 1 below presents estimates of harvest progress by region, while Table 2 shows the percentage of crops in swath.

Provincially, 72 per cent of the crop has been harvested, compared to 45 per cent two weeks ago, and 50 per cent a year ago. Also, 15 per cent of the crop is in swath, while 13 per cent remains standing. Harvest in the Southern Region is nearly complete, with 97 per cent of crops combined and two per cent in swath. The Central Region has 87 per cent of crops combined and nine per cent in swath. In the North East Region, 83 per cent of crops have been harvested, with 13 per cent in swath, while the North West Region reported 56 per cent harvested, and 25 per cent swathed. The Peace Region reported 29 per cent harvested and 39 per cent swathed, as crops were slow to reach maturity, due to the cool, wet summer.

Overall, provincial average yields are estimated to be above their 10-year averages. As well, quality is reported as mostly good, although there have been reports in some areas of ergot in wheat and high green seed count in canola.

In the province, about 88 per cent of dryland hay production came from first cut, with 12 per cent from second cut. The quality of first and second cut hay was largely rated as fair to excellent. Areas with irrigated hay production had about 62 per cent from first cut, 36 per cent from second cut and two per cent from a third cut. As well, quality was largely rated as good to excellent.

Pasture conditions in the province are rated as 15 per cent poor, 34 per cent fair, 37 per cent good and 14 per cent excellent. Sub-surface moisture is largely rated as fair to excellent.

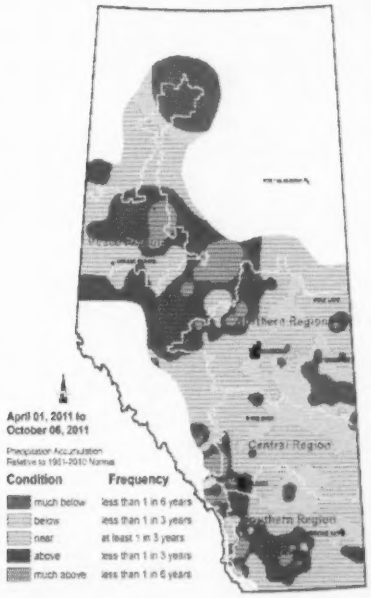

Table 1: Alberta Crop Harvest Progress, as of October 6, 2011

	South	Central	N. East	N. West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat	97.0%	91.4%	88.7%	58.2%	31.9%	**73.8%**
Durum Wheat	97.8%	95.8%	100.0%	-	-	**97.2%**
Oats	95.0%	80.3%	86.8%	52.5%	25.4%	**66.5%**
Barley	95.5%	86.7%	89.9%	64.3%	32.7%	**74.4%**
Canola	96.2%	78.8%	69.5%	47.5%	22.3%	**63.1%**
Dry Peas	100.0%	99.2%	99.6%	98.3%	80.8%	**95.6%**
All Crops	**96.6%**	**86.9%**	**83.2%**	**55.9%**	**28.8%**	**72.3%**

Table 2: Alberta Crops in Swath, as of October 6, 2011

	South	Central	N. East	N. West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat	1.6%	6.0%	5.8%	10.4%	16.5%	**8.0%**
Durum Wheat	1.0%	2.5%	0.0%	-	-	**1.5%**
Oats	3.8%	12.9%	10.2%	12.5%	16.2%	**11.7%**
Barley	2.4%	8.0%	9.1%	18.9%	15.4%	**10.7%**
Canola	3.8%	17.3%	27.5%	48.2%	71.8%	**33.5%**
Dry Peas	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	7.5%	**1.6%**
All Crops	**2.0%**	**9.2%**	**13.4%**	**25.2%**	**39.0%**	**14.8%**

Source: Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

Our thanks to Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen, staff of AFSC and the Alberta Ag-Info Centre for their partnership and contribution to the Alberta Crop Reporting Program.
The precipitation map is compiled by Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, Environmental Stewardship Division, Technology and Innovation Branch.
The next Alberta Crop Report is scheduled for release on October 25, 2011

Regional Assessments:

The 2011 Alberta Crop Report Series continues to provide summaries for the following five regions:

Region One: Southern (Strathmore, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Foremost)

- Overall, 97 per cent of crops are in the bin, with two per cent in swath and one per cent still standing. Harvest of dry peas is now complete. Average yields for major crops are estimated to be above average, and of good quality. Potatoes and dry beans are nearly complete, at 89 per cent and 99 per cent harvested respectively. However, only 21 per cent of sugar beets have been harvested.
- First cut hay accounted for 88 per cent of dryland hay production, with the remaining 12 per cent from second cut hay operations. About 62 per cent of irrigated hay production came from first cut, 36 per cent from the second cut and two per cent from the third cut. Pastures are largely in fair to excellent condition.
- Surface moisture is rated at 58 per cent poor, 21 per cent fair, and 21 per cent in the good to excellent range. Sub-surface moisture is rated at 21 per cent poor, 47 per cent fair and 32 per cent in the good to excellent range.

Region Two: Central (Rimbey, Airdrie, Coronation, Oyen)

- About 87 per cent of crops are in the bin, with nine per cent in swath, and four per cent still standing. Nearly 79 per cent of canola is combined, with 17 per cent in swath and four per cent still standing. Dry peas are virtually complete with 99 per cent harvested. The western portion of the region has been impacted by rainfall and frost over the past two weeks.
- Major crops average yields are estimated to be above average and of good quality. However, some areas are reporting ergot which will cause some grade loss.
- About 97 per cent of dryland hay production came from first cut and was mostly rated as good to excellent quality. Pastures are generally in fair to excellent condition. Surface and sub-surface moisture conditions are largely rated as fair to excellent.

Region Three: North East (Smoky Lake, Vermilion, Camrose, Provost)

- Over the past two weeks, harvest progress has been slow due to rain showers. Overall, 83 per cent of crops are in the bin, with 13 per cent in swath and four per cent still standing. About 70 per cent of canola is combined, with 28 per cent in swath and two per cent still standing, due to high green seed counts.
- Area average yields for major crops are estimated to be above average, while quality is mostly good.
- Nearly 90 per cent of hay production came from first cut, while most first and second cut hay quality is rated as fair to excellent. Pasture is rated at 38 per cent poor, 48 per cent fair and 14 per cent in the good to excellent range. Surface and sub-surface moisture are mostly rated in fair to good condition, while some eastern portions of the Region are poor.

Region Four: North West (Barrhead, Edmonton, Leduc, Drayton Valley, Athabasca)

- Harvest had been progressing well in the region until some recent wet weather. Warm, dry weather will be necessary for harvest to be completed. About 56 per cent of crops are in the bin with 25 per cent in swath and 19 per cent still standing. For canola, 48 per cent is harvested and another 48 per cent is in swath, with four per cent still standing. Dry peas are virtually complete, with 98 per cent harvested. Overall, estimated crop yields are about average, with varying quality.
- About 71 per cent of hay production came from first cut, with quality mostly rated as poor to good. However, second cut hay is largely rated as good to excellent. Pasture is rated as 13 per cent poor, 53 per cent fair, 27 per cent good and seven per cent excellent.
- Both surface and sub-surface moisture conditions are mostly rated as fair to excellent.

Region Five: Peace River (Fairview, Falher, Grande Prairie, Valleyview)

- Recent cool and wet weather has further slowed or halted harvest progress in some areas. An extended period of warm, dry weather is needed to complete harvest. About 32 per cent of crops are still standing, with 29 per cent in the bin, and 39 per cent in swath. For canola, 72 per cent is in swath, while 22 per cent is harvested and six per cent still standing. Dry peas are 81 per cent combined, with seven per cent swathed and 12 per cent still standing. Overall, average yields are estimated to be about average, while quality is mostly good.
- Approximately 82 per cent of hay production came from first cut, with quality ranging from poor to excellent. The remaining 18 per cent was from second cut, and quality rated largely as fair to excellent.
- Overall, surface moisture conditions are rated as being in excellent to fair condition, with a minimal amount as poor or excessive. Sub-surface moisture is rated at 59 per cent excellent, 35 per cent good, and six per cent fair.

Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
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The 2011 Alberta crop reporting series is available on the Internet at: *http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sdd4191*